



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Olympia, WA 98504-5710

April 7, 2006

Dear Foster Youth:

We have a new way to help children and youth when they run away from foster care or when somebody takes them without their social workers' permission.

We are very concerned about your safety and the safety of all children and youth in foster care. We want you to feel welcome and included in planning for your future. We also want to find ways to solve any problems that come up so that you can be as comfortable as possible in your foster home.

We are concerned about children and youth who leave their foster homes when they are frustrated, angry or afraid of the situation where they are living. We worry about children who are taken away from their placement by an adult who has not made a plan with the social worker. We know that children and youth who leave care without a plan may get into difficult, even dangerous situations.

If this happens to you, we want to make sure you are safe and make it easier for you to come back. Social workers will work with your family, friends, and other adults who care about you to find ways to meet your needs and keep you safe. Social workers will also be sitting down with you and the important adults in your life when you return to care to make sure that problems you are worried about get answered.

We have a hotline for youth in these situations. I hope that you never need to call, but we want you to have this phone number in case you need help. The phone number is 1-877-550-HOPE (1-877-550-4673). I have included a card for your wallet with the hotline's number. Beginning May 1, 2006, this hotline is available to you 24 hours every day. A person that has experience helping youth in trouble will answer the call and work with you to keep you safe.

Please talk with your social worker about this if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Stephani
Assistant Secretary
Children's Administration